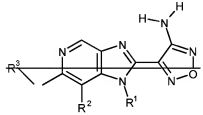
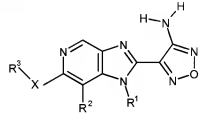
Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended). A compound according to formula (I) ~~hereinbelow~~:

~~The present invention thus provides compounds of the general formula (I)~~



(I)



(I)

~~and physiologically~~ or a pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof wherein,

X represents O or R^3X represents F, Cl, or Br;

R^1 represents hydrogen or C_{1-6} alkyl;

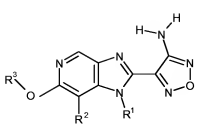
R^2 represents Cl, Br, ~~or~~ I, optionally substituted phenyl, heteroaryl, or $CONR^4R^5$;

R^3 represents C_{1-6} alkyl, optionally substituted by a group selected from the group consisting of optionally substituted phenyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, heteroaryl, heterocyclyl, NH_2, R^4R^5N, acylamino, hydroxy, CO_2R^4, $CONR^4R^5$, NR^4COR^5, NR^4CSR^5, $SO_2NR^4R^5$, $NR^4SO_2R^5$, and $OalkNR^4R^5$ optionally substituted phenyl, heteroaryl, or heterocyclyl; and

R^4 and R^5, independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkylalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, heteroaryl, heteroarylalkyl, heterocyclyl and heterocyclylalkyl; or together form a ring; and

alk is a C_{2-4} straight or branched alkylene chain.

2. (Currently Amended). A compound according to claim 1 having the general formula (II)



(I)

~~and physiologically acceptable salts~~ or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein

R^1 represents C_{1-4} alkyl;

R^2 represents optionally substituted phenyl or $CONR^4R^5$;

R^3 represents optionally substituted phenyl or heteroaryl;

R^4 and R^5, independently represent a ~~group~~ substituent selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl, optionally substituted C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{3-7} cycloalkylalkyl, heterocyclyl, and heterocycloalkyl, or R^4 and R^5 together form a ring.

3. (Currently Amended). A compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein the compound is ~~according to claim 1~~ selected from the group consisting of:

4-{1-Ethyl-6-[(4-fluorophenyl)oxy]-7-phenyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-2-yl}-furazan-3-amine;

4-{1-Ethyl-7-(4-fluorophenyl)-6-[(4-fluorophenyl)oxy]-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-2-yl}-furazan-3-amine;

4-{1-Ethyl-7-{3-[(ethylamino)methyl]phenyl}-6-[(4-fluorophenyl)oxy]-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-2-yl}-furazan-3-amine; and

4-{7-{[(3*S*)-3-Amino-1-pyrrolidinyl]carbonyl}-1-ethyl-6-[(4-fluorophenyl)oxy]-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-2-yl}-furazan-3-amine.

4-7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented). A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to claim 1 and a suitable carrier.

9. (New). The compound according to Claim 2 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein

R^2 represents $CONR^4R^5$ or phenyl optionally substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halo and alkylaminoalkyl;

R^3 represents phenyl optionally substituted with halo, acylamino, or $CH_3C(CH_3)_2$-OC(O)-NH; and

R^4 and R^5 independently are H or C_{1-6} alkyl or together form a ring.